



SELF-SUSTAINING STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAMS

The National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives' Community Traffic Safety Clearinghouse conducted an assessment of community traffic safety programs (CTSPs) and their efforts to become self-sustaining. The assessment, funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), documents strategies and presents examples of what some CTSPs have done to continue their programs. A paper, *Self-Sustaining Strategies for Community Traffic Safety Programs*, is now available.

Although there is as much diversity in CTSPs as there are similarities, the assessment identified six central strategies for achieving self-sufficiency. For each strategy, the paper describes how several communities implemented the approach, their rationale for selecting that particular strategy, the support they won and obstacles that were overcome, and the success they have achieved in becoming independent. While the six strategies are discussed separately, most CTSPs combined several strategies to achieve their goal, and almost all relied upon 402 funds for the initial startup period. A contact person is listed for each of these programs.

Fines and Surcharges

At local levels, small surcharges may be an acceptable way of directing money to CTSPs, and once implemented, become a stable source of funding for traffic safety. Earmarking funds for any use, however, can run into opposition in some communities. In Jackson, Michigan, the Traffic Safety Commission worked with the Twelfth District Judges to increase court costs by five dollars for each infraction and the Jackson County Commission pledged that the generated funds would be appropriated to the CTSP. The success in this

approach is based on the concept of involving motorists who are responsible for the problem as part of the solution. Other success stories from New York and Lander, Wyoming are described.

Permanent Part of State or Local Government

Becoming part of the state or local government provides a CTSP with a stable base. Staffed by state employees who help communities develop traffic safety programs, this approach is often successful where it complements an existing unit of government. Successful examples from Phoenix, Arizona, Dakota County, Minnesota, and the state of Virginia are highlighted.

Fees for Services

Many CTSPs conduct DWI education for convicted drivers, defensive driving courses for corporate fleets, and substance abuse prevention services for juvenile diversion programs. Generally these efforts support a portion of the CTSP through fees paid by those who take the courses. Successful examples are from Stark County, Ohio, and San Antonio, Texas.

Federal Funds Outside Traffic Safety

Some CTSPs build upon their special areas of expertise or relate their activities to other program areas to qualify for federal funds from sources other than traffic safety. The CTSP in Lowell, Massachusetts, for example, is qualifying for Community Development Block Grant funds because of its success in working with low income, minority neighborhoods. The CTSP in Carbon County, Wyoming is qualifying for a grant under the Drug Free Schools and Community Act because of extensive experience with substance abuse prevention for youth.





Volunteer Support

Almost every CTSP relies upon energetic volunteers to accomplish its goals. The CTSP in Ocean County, New Jersey, however, is entirely staffed and run by retired senior citizens and other interested volunteers. Other CTSPs rely upon a salaried coordinator to organize the volunteers. In Hamilton County, Indiana, community funds support the CTSP's activities which are implemented by volunteers and by professionals in participating agencies such as the law enforcement agency, local schools, and the State Highway Safety Agency.

In-Kind Contributions

If a CTSP has a systematic plan for securing in-kind contributions, these donations can be counted as funds to support part of the budget, also freeing

program dollars for additional activities. Often community members become part of the CTSP coalition, expanding support for traffic safety activities. The CTSP in Huntington, West Virginia has successfully followed this process.

This brief paper will be useful to community traffic safety leaders who are looking for ways to achieve self-sufficiency in their communities.

For additional information about this project or a copy of the paper, *Self-Sustaining Strategies for Community Traffic Safety Programs* contact: Marilena Amoni, NHTSA, NTS-02, Room 5125, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590, or send a fax to (202) 366-7149.

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